

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 6 and 7 are hereby canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for considering the references cited with the Information Disclosure Statements filed March 26, 2004, June 13, 2006 and September 13, 2006.

Additionally, Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for foreign priority.

Drawing Objections

The Examiner objected to the drawings for failing to show every feature of the invention as specified in the claims.

Applicant submits that this objection is moot with regard to the key and keyway feature of claims 6 and 7 as these claims are hereby canceled. With regard to claim 3, Applicant submits that this feature is illustrated in FIG. 11.

Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this objection.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to the claims for various informalities. Applicant submits that the present amendments to the claims obviate this objection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 8 and 16 under § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter the applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant submits that the present amendments to the claims obviate this rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 7 and 11-17 under § 102(b) as being anticipated by Takeshi (JP 2002-025167). Applicant traverses this rejection as follows.

Applicant respectfully submits that Takeshi fails to disclose, at least, a picker provided on said carriage wherein said picker has a gripper and the carriage has cums which make said gripper open or close in response to the movement of said picker, as recited in claim 1.

The Examiner applies Takeshi, alleging that it disclose all the features recited in claim 1. However, Takeshi merely discloses an auto changer which has an attaching and detaching section 30 and an auxiliary attaching and detaching section 35. The attaching and detaching section 30 is adapted to move a holding section 31 holding a cartridge 9 in a carrying in and out direction according to the rotation of a revolving shaft 51A. (*See FIGS. 3 & 4*). The auxiliary attaching and detaching section 35 uses a revolving shaft 51B instead of the revolving shaft 51A. The holding section 31 has hooks 34 which seize the cartridge 9. Furthermore, Takeshi discloses that the holding section 31 and hooks 34 are driven by a guide screw 33, but is otherwise silent about how the hooks 34 open or close.

Accordingly, Takeshi fails to disclose a picker having a gripper and a carriage having cums which make said gripper open or close in response to the movement of the picker, as recited in claim 1. Moreover, Applicant submits that this feature is not inherent within Takeshi.

Thus, Applicant submits that claim 1 is allowable for at least this reason. Additionally, Applicant submits that claims 2-3 and 11-15 are allowable, at least because of their dependency.

Further, because claim 16 and 17 recite features similar to those argued above with regard to claim 1, Applicant submits that claims 16 and 17 are allowable, at least for the same reasons set forth above.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 4, 5 and 8-10 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takeshi in view of Ono (JP 03-147564). Applicant traverses this rejection as follows.

Applicant submits that because Ono, either taken alone or in combination with Takeshi, fails to compensate for the above noted deficiencies of Takeshi as applied to claim 1, that claims 4, 5 and 8-10 are allowable, at least because of their dependency.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claim 6 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takeshi in view of Teramachi (US 4, 127,309).

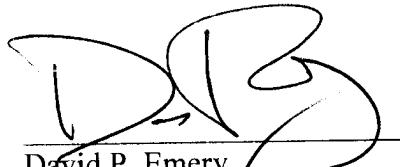
Applicant submits that this rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of claim 6 by this Amendment.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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